

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

EB-08 COME-00 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-13 FRB-03

XMB-02 HA-05 OPIC-03 /106 W

-----124579 281029Z /11

R 280959Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0766

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANILA 15063

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEAN, E

SUBJECT: US/ASEAN MINISTERIAL -- GOP BRIEFING OF DIP-
LOMATS

1. SUMMARY. ROMULO, IN HIS BRIEFINGS OF THE JAPANESE AND EC AMBASSADORS, HAS DESCRIBED THE US/ASEAN MINISTERIAL AS "AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS." PATERNO SUBSEQUENTLY BRIEFED THE EC AMBASSADORS ON THE ECONOMIC SUBJECTS, AND THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR REPORTS THAT BOTH PATERNO AND VIRATA SHARE ROMULO'S POSITIVE ASSESSMENT. GOP BRIEFINGS WERE REPORTEDLY UNDERTAKEN IN ORDER TO COUNTERACT DENIGRATING COMMENTARIES BY COLUMNISTS, PARTICULARLY DOROY VALENCIA, WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN INSPIRED BY MRS. MARCOS. END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL ROMULO BRIEFED THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR AND THEN SEPARATELY THE EC AMBASSADORS ON AUGUST 22. JAPAN-
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ESE AMBASSADOR IN HIS CABLE SAID THAT ROMULO DESCRIBED THE US/ASEAN MINISTERIAL AS "AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS"; MRS. MANALO USED SAME PHRASE IN CONVERSATION WITH EMB-OFF. IN HIS REPORT TO THE INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA, ROMULO USED THE WORDS "HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL."

3. ACCORDING TO THE JAPANESE REPORT, ROMULO SAID THAT

ASEAN TOLD THE UNITED STATES THAT IT DID NOT COME TO BEG AND DID NOT EXPECT AID. ASEAN WANTED TO PRESENT ITSELF AND ITS ASPIRATIONS TO THE U.S. CONGRESS AND TO THE PUBLIC. IT WAS PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF THE MINISTERIAL, PARTICULARLY THE PLEDGE ON COMMON FUND NEGOTIATIONS AND U.S. AGREEMENT TO DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION ON SUCH PROJECTS AS DRUG PREVENTION. JAPANESE REPORT WAS SHORT, AND APPARENTLY ROMULO HAD GIVEN ONLY A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE MEETING.

4. IN HIS BRIEFING OF THE EC AMBASSADORS, ROMULO MADE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME POINTS, BUT DID NOT DWELL TOO LONG ON THE ECONOMIC SUBJECTS, AS MINISTER PATERNO WAS SCHEDULED TO DISCUSS THEM THE NEXT DAY OVER LUNCH WITH THE EC AMBASSADORS. ROMULO STRESSED THAT A HEALTHY ECONOMY WAS ESSENTIAL TO THE POLITICAL STABILITY OF ASEAN AND APPEALED TO THE UNITED STATES AND EC TO HELP, PARTICULARLY BY OPENING UP THEIR MARKETS.

5. ROMULO DISCUSSED THE INDOCHINESE SITUATION AND SAID THAT BOTH ASEAN AND THE UNITED STATES AGREED ON "A NEUTRAL POLICY" REGARDING THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SRV AND THE PRC AND KAMPUCHEA. HE INFORMED THAT SRV PM PHAM VAN DONG WAS COMING TO THE PHILIPPINES (ON SEPTEMBER 16). ASEAN WOULD NOT AGREE WITH THE SRV FORMULATION OF THE ZONE OF PEACE, FRIENDSHIP AND NEUTRALITY. THE GOP HAD
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NO PROPOSALS TO MAKE TO PHAM VAN DONG AND WOULD NOT AGREE TO ANY.

6. ROMULO ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF TACKLING THE REFUGEE PROBLEM. HE HOPED THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER NON-ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD REALIZE THE POTENTIAL RISK IN THE CREATION OF ANOTHER PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

7. PATERNO'S BRIEFING OF THE EC AMBASSADORS WAS OVER LUNCH AND APPARENTLY WAS A BIT DISJOINTED. GERMAN REPORT OF THIS BRIEFING ALSO MELDED TOGETHER A DISCUSSION WHICH THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR HAD WITH MINISTER VIRATA AT MALACANANG WHILE THEY WERE WAITING FOR THE START OF A CEREMONY. BASICALLY, BOTH PATERNO AND VIRATA SHARE THE POSITIVE ASSESSMENT MADE BY ROMULO -- THAT THE DIALOGUE WITH THE UNITED STATES WAS OPEN AND GENUINE. MEETINGS WITH CONGRESS WERE SUCCESSFUL IN BRINGING ABOUT A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE U.S. CONGRESSMEN THAT THERE WAS A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH, AND POLITICAL STABILITY. PATERNO THOUGHT THAT DEEPER UNDERSTANDING WILL LEAD TO MORE CONCRETE RESULTS.

8. PATERNO TOLD THE EC AMBASSADORS THAT THERE WAS A BASIC CHANGE IN U.S. ATTITUDE ON THE COMMON FUND. THE EXECUTIVE WAS READY TO GO TO CONGRESS AND ALSO APPROACH OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO COME TOGETHER FOR A COM-PROMISE. FYI: GERMAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, HOWEVER, REPORTED THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY AND COMMENTED THAT GOP OPTIMISM WAS PARTLY CONSEQUENCE OF READING TOO MUCH INTO SECRETARY VANCE'S OPEN WAY OF CONDUCTING NEGOTIATIONS. END FYI.

9. PATERNO WAS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT THE USG

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MANILA 15063

WAS FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD THE SMALL SCALE INDUSTRY AND SHIPPING PROJECTS, TO WHICH EMBOFF SAID THAT THESE WERE NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED IN THE JOINT PRESS STATEMENT. COMMENT: THE FIRST PROJECT IS PATERNO'S, AND THE SECOND IS A PHILIPPINE FAVORITE. END COMMENT. PATERNO WELCOMED THE OPIC INVESTMENT MISSION SINCE IT WOULD PROMOTE PRIMARILY INVESTMENTS BY SMALL U.S. FIRMS RATHER THAN THOSE OF THE MULTINATIONAL GIANTS.

10. COMMENT: FOREIGN OFFICE CONTACTS HAVE TOLD US THAT THE ROMULO AND PATERNO BRIEFINGS WERE DESIGNED TO COUNTERACT THE UNFAVORABLE COMMENTARIES MADE BY COLUMNISTS, PARTICULARLY DOROY VALENCIA, WHICH THEY BELIEVE WERE

INSPIRED BY MRS. MARCOS WHO WAS DISAPPOINTED AT HER LACK
OF A ROLE AT THE MEETING AND WHO IS STILL UPSET OVER HER
RECEPTION BY HER CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS. JAPANESE AND
GERMAN EMBOFFS TOLD US, ON OTHER HAND, THAT THEY HAD
SOUGHT BRIEFINGS. IN ANY CASE, GOP IS TELLING EVERYONE
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THE SAME STORY -- THE US/ASEAN MEETING WAS A GREAT
SUCCESS. MURPHY

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